

## CLAIMS

1. A method (300, 500, 600, 800) for controlling an apparatus having an emergency alert function, comprising steps of:

5 detecting a first condition wherein signal strength on a selected channel frequency associated with said emergency alert function exceeds a predetermined threshold (610);

detecting a second condition wherein a broadcast test associated with said emergency alert function is passed (805, 815, 830); and

10 providing a predetermined output if said first and second conditions are detected.

2. The method (300, 500, 600, 800) of claim 1, wherein said broadcast test includes determining whether said selected channel frequency receives a user  
15 selected location code associated with said emergency alert function.

3. The method (300, 500, 600, 800) of claim 2, wherein said broadcast test is performed on a periodic basis.

20 4. The method (300, 500, 600, 800) of claim 1, further comprised of:  
tuning a plurality of channel frequencies associated with said emergency alert function (310); and

identifying one of said channel frequencies having higher signal strength relative to said other channel frequencies as said selected channel  
25 frequency (310).

5. The method (300, 500, 600, 800) of claim 4, further comprised of using said selected channel frequency to receive emergency alert signals capable of activating said emergency alert function (320).

30 6. The method (300, 500, 600, 800) of claim 1, further comprised of:  
providing a first output message (700) if said first condition is not detected (650); and

providing a second output message (900, 1000, 1100) if said second condition is not detected (825, 840, 860).

7. The method (300, 500, 600, 800) of claim 6, wherein said first and  
5 second output messages each indicates a corrective action.

8. An apparatus (20) having an emergency alert function, comprising:  
processing means (27) for detecting a first condition wherein signal  
strength on a selected channel frequency associated with said emergency alert  
10 function exceeds a predetermined threshold, and for detecting a second condition  
wherein a broadcast test associated with said emergency alert function is passed;  
and

first output means (30) for providing a predetermined output if said first  
and second conditions are detected.

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9. The apparatus (20) of claim 8, wherein said broadcast test includes  
determining whether said selected channel frequency receives a user selected  
location code associated with said emergency alert function.

10. The apparatus (20) of claim 9, wherein said broadcast test is performed  
20 on a periodic basis.

11. The apparatus (20) of claim 8, further comprising:  
tuning means (22) for tuning a plurality of channel frequencies  
25 associated with said emergency alert function; and

wherein one of said channel frequencies having higher signal strength  
relative to said other channel frequencies is identified as said selected channel  
frequency.

12. The apparatus (20) of claim 11, wherein said tuning means (22) tunes  
30 said selected channel frequency to receive emergency alert signals capable of  
activating said emergency alert function.

13. The apparatus (20) of claim 8, further comprising second output means (29) for providing a first output message if said first condition is not detected, and for providing a second output message if said second condition is not detected.

5 14. The apparatus (20) of claim 13, wherein said first and second output messages each indicates a corrective action.

15. A television signal receiver (20) having an emergency alert function, comprising:

10 a processor (27) operative to detect a first condition wherein signal strength on a selected channel frequency associated with said emergency alert function exceeds a predetermined threshold, and to detect a second condition wherein a broadcast test associated with said emergency alert function is passed; and

15 a visual indicator (30) operative to provide a predetermined output if said first and second conditions are detected.

16. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 15, wherein said broadcast test includes determining whether said selected channel frequency receives a user  
20 selected location code associated with said emergency alert function.

17. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 16, wherein said broadcast test is performed on a periodic basis.

25 18. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 15, further comprising:  
a tuner (22) operative to tune a plurality of channel frequencies associated with said emergency alert function; and

wherein one of said channel frequencies having higher signal strength relative to said other channel frequencies is identified as said selected channel  
30 frequency.

19. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 18, wherein said tuner (22) tunes said selected channel frequency to receive emergency alert signals capable of activating said emergency alert function.

20. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 15, further comprising a display (29) operative to provide a first output message if said first condition is not detected, and a second output message if said second condition is not detected.

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21. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 20, wherein said first and second output messages each indicates a corrective action.